TODDY SHOPS—SYSTEM OF LICENSING.

74. Mr. V. K. Krishnankutty *(Ezhuvas-Trichur):* Will the Government be pleased to state : —

(*a*) when the present system of auctioning single shops publicly was adopted ;

(*b*) whether before the present system was put into practice the monopoly for selling toddy was given to a single contractor for a taluk or taluks ;

(*c*) if the answer is in the affirmative, when this monopoly system was started and for how many years it worked ;

(*d*) whether there is any Government Proceedings changing the monopoly system and adopting the present practice ;

(*e*) if there is a Proceedings, will the Government be pleased to print and place on the table of each member a copy of the Proceedings ?

Mr. M. Raman Menon *(Commissioner of Excise):* (*a*) The present system of auctioning toddy shops independently was introduced in the Taluks of Trichur, Talappalli and Chittur with effect from 1088, and in Cochin-Kanayannur, Cranganur and Mukundapuram with effect from 1092.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) It is not possible to specify the dates and periods. The system might at any rate have been in existence and continued for many years prior to 1088 and 1092.

(*d*) Yes.

(*e*) Copies of the Proceedings are placed on the Council table.

TODDY SHOPS—BIDDING BY SAME CONTRACTOR.

75. Mr. V. K. Krishnankutty *(Ezhuvas-Trichur):* Will the Government be pleased to state : —

(*a*) whether more than 7 toddy shops were auctioned or taken under tender by one contractor during the last three years and for 1115 ;

(*b*) if the answer is in the affirmative, the names of such contractors, and the shops given to them and the auction amounts of each shop ;

(*c*) similar statistics for the tobacco shops ;

(*d*) whether the Government have received communications protesting against the practice of giving a number of shops to the same contractor ?

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Mr. M. Raman Menon *(Commissioner of Excise):* (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Vide statement No. I— Placed on the Council table.

(*c*) Vide statement No. II—Placed on the Council table.

(*d*) Yes, resolutions have been received from the hon'ble member himself as well as from the hon'ble members Messrs. A. V. Moothedan and V. K. Kutty.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET—(*cont*).

Mr. President : The House will now proceed with the General Discussion on the Budget.

Mr. L. M. Pylee (*Latin Christians-Ernakulam*)**:** President Sir, It is, indeed, a matter of much gratification that, in spite of the world being still in the clutches of economic depression, and in spite of adverse economic conditions resulting from international complications and even chaos, our happy little State is blessed with a substantially good surplus budget. But I do not give much credit to the Government for it; because with an income of 24¼ lakhs from customs alone, i. e., nearly a quarter of revenue from that non-tax source only, any Government under normal conditions and with ordinary prudence in expenditure must be able to show a surplus like ours.

But there are certain things of which the Government can feel justly proud. The creation of the Revenue Reserve Fund is a stroke of statesmanly and administrative genius, while the allotment of more and more funds for the nation-building departments and the special allotment of one lakh of rupees for rural development alone are, indeed, features that are highly laudable in this year's Budget. It would be now up to the Hon'ble Minister to see that the increased allotments and the special contribution are well-spent, not in a haphazard manner, but on lines laid down by intelligent and careful planning. Certain rudimentary amenities of civic and civilised life are atrociously lacking in rural areas, and these should be first looked into. Roads, water-supplies, sanitation and medical attendance should receive precedence over other less urgent items. I would suggest to the Government to have a five or ten-year plan for rural uplift, especially as we now notice the efforts of the National Planning Committee in this matter.

Into the intricate meshes of the Budget, I shall not enter. But let me point out some directions in which a more liberal policy on the part of the Government is necessary. Although it is true that our land-tax is not unduly heavy, still owing to the economic depression and the fall in prices of agricultural products, our agricultural population is in dire distress. A remission of land revenue is therefore an urgent necessity, and many Governments in India have done this. But

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